

The Virtual Arts and Life Magazine

r e Z

september 2016

Fiddler on the Roof

Jami Mills Interviews
Maestro Anu Papp

The Monument
by Cyberphoria

Unpredictable
by Cat Boccaccio

Peyote Dreams
by Consuela Hypatia Caldwell

The Cabin Boy
As told by RoseDrop Rust

poetry:

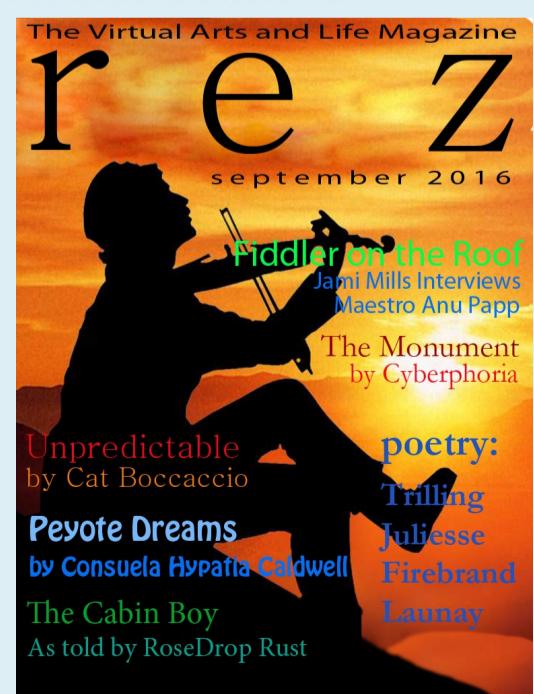
Trilling
Juliesse
Firebrand
Launay

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read *rez Magazine* online at <http://rezmagazine.com>

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About the Cover: There are few musical productions more beloved than *Fiddler on the Roof*, and perhaps no one is better suited to bring it to the virtual stage than Anu Papp, the founder and director of the [muse] dance company. It's must-see entertainment later this month.



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PLAYGROUND



FIDDLER ON THE ROO

by J
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OF
ami Mills
n interview with Anu Papp



The original Broadway production of *Fiddler on the Roof* opened in 1964, and it has taken more than 50 years for this award-winning show to hit the metaverse. Later this month (September 25th), the [muse] dance company will be presenting its virtual interpretation of *Fiddler* to a full house at the [muse] Theatre.

Anu Papp, the founder and director of [muse], is a renowned singer, songwriter, musician, producer, director, builder, dancer, choreographer, set designer, costume designer, cat herder. (I'm out of breath just typing this....imagine how much energy is required to actually be Anu Papp!) I'm sure I've left several things out, but hopefully you get the point. Ms. Papp has some serious theater cred and I'm not going too far out on a limb to say that *Fiddler* is in very good hands with Anu at the helm.

Why *Fiddler*? That's what we're about to find out, but before we do, here's some background on this wonderful musical.

We owe the most thanks to Sholem Aleichem, who wrote the original collection of stories (in Yiddish), called *Tevye and His Daughters*, set at the turn of the 20th century. They describe the exploits of the central character Tevye, an impoverished father determined to maintain his family's

Jewish roots in the face of his stubborn daughters who don't feel the same pull of tradition.

Fiddler is one of the most beloved productions ever, so while it's a natural choice for [muse], it's also one that comes with a great deal of responsibility -- to not only show respect for the material, but also hopefully to add some new insights as well.



[muse] will be premiering *Fiddler* at Origen's Chinese Playhouse on September 15th and 17th, with one night only at the [muse] Theatre on September 25th.

room (you can't help but smile when you hear *Sunrise, Sunset* and *Matchmaker, Matchmaker*), the dancers begin to sway in beautifully choreographed numbers, and we're transported. This is why so many

And when you hear the excited chatter among the dancers themselves, before and after the show, you know that Anu is doing something special with her talented troupe.

A word about the [muse] Theatre itself. As you enter, you'll see photos of the troupe's individual performers in the lobby, along with the company's modernist logo. Once inside, you immediately feel the comfort of the intimate, uncrowded space. The sight lines for each of the 40 or so seats are perfect. As you relax into the sumptuous seats, you're already in the mood for the night's entertainment.

I was fortunate enough to wheedle an invitation from Anu to attend two dress rehearsals of *Fiddler*, and as the curtain rises, the first thing that strikes you about the production is how perfectly she captures the village where Tevye and his daughters live. A crescent moon hovers above the thatched roofs, with chickens and livestock milling around. The dancers are in resplendent costumes (designed by Anu herself), and the mood is now complete. The strains of the *Fiddler* score fill the

people involved with the [muse] dance company, and the *Fiddler* production in particular, are willing to work so hard (for literally months) -- to make a little magic.

It will put your theatrical experience in context if I share with you [muse]'s Mission Statement:

"To have our dancers achieve new levels of artistry and performance beyond what is possible in their current experiences in the dance community. To empower dancers to a professional level with a competitive edge. To make possible a dancer's dream to pursue a higher level of dance performance or as a dance educator." The officially stated values of the Company? "Integrity, Leadership, Responsibility, Professionalism and Character." Boy, does it show.





The best directors always seem to be those with a strong commitment to nurturing talent and inspiring them to reach heights they themselves perhaps never could have imagined. I'm thinking of chryblnd Scribe (Idle Rogue) and Cassie Parker (TerpsiCorps) as two such theatrical directors. The art form is thriving now, so there are so many highly respected directors that I'm failing to mention. And when you hear the excited chatter among the dancers themselves, before and after a show, you know that Anu is doing something special with her talented troupe. That's her commitment to each of her dancers, and without it, the creative spark that fuels the most successful shows wouldn't exist.

I was lucky enough to catch up with Anu recently, and below are a few snippets from our conversation:

JM: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. First off, our readers are always interested in learning about the earliest influences on our creative types. What makes them tick? What drives them? As far as you can recall, were your creative proclivities nurtured by your parents as you were growing up? Were you surrounded by art as a child, or did you find your own direction on your own?

AP: A little of both. I started playing piano at the early age of four. Both my

parents were very nurturing, seeing a glimpse of talent early on. My father sang in a barbershop quartet and my mother went on to an International Championship with Sweet Adeline's, so I always had music around me in one form or another. I went on to other mediums on my own as I got older, from writing to painting and then as a visual and content creator in Second Life. The need to create beauty on all levels, to capture the heart of the audience, is my passion in life, both SL and RL.

JM: What drew you to Second Life originally?

AP: For many years, I owned a non-profit, In Gaia's Lap, and its division, Artists4Mercy. The motto was to "connect the Globe through the power of music." I did that by means of an online radio broadcast. I came to Second Life in 2007 - by recommendation of a friend in RL - to promote my cause. Ironically, while stumbling around the grid, I located a sim that is long gone, Lost Gardens of Apollo. I heard "This is Anu, you are listening to Artists4Mercy." I knew I was in the right place.

JM: If you would, please give us a summary of your creations here, from your earliest production to present day.

AP: Historical building was my



mainstay in Second Life for many years. My largest project was Prague Castle, which spread over four sims and took me a year to complete; since then, the Petit Trianon, Schoenbrunn Castle, and many others. Currently I am building my own sets for full productions I am choreographing.

JM: You're a veritable whirling dervish of activity. What does drive you?

AP: The passion to make a difference in one's life. To continue to set levels of excellence, pushing my creative boundaries as far as Second Life allows me to.

JM: You have a background in

classical piano and voice. In fact, you have given a series of piano recitals that you call Impromptu (the last one at the end of July). What formal studying have you had that forms the foundation of your work, both with regard to music and also design and choreography?

AP: I was fortunate to have some of the finest teachers in the world growing up, both in classical and Jazz piano. With voice and other mediums, there was no formal training but an evolvement of Self. My career in RL was focused on "green" building and assisting architects with design. My motto was "If you are not building green, you won't be building in time." Second Life became a virtual



AutoCAD for me, if you will.

JM: Of all the creations you've given birth to here, which ones are you most proud of? Which posed the greatest challenges?

AP: That is a difficult question to answer. Each creation has its own unique challenges, whether it be the movements or the textures. As I have evolved as a creator in Second Life, so has my work. My current project, *Fiddler on the Roof*, is one I am proud of. Seeing the production come to life after many months is rewarding.

JM: Is there one work that you've always had in the back of your mind

that you'd love to bring to SL if you could?

AP: One of my strongest building inspirations and dear friend in RL, Paolo Soleri, who has since left us, created an arcological village named Arcosanti. <https://arcosanti.org/>. One of the last students of Frank Lloyd Wright, Paolo was a visionary beyond his time. In his memory, I would like to build and recreate this urban laboratory in Second Life.

JM: Of all the musicals/plays to choose from, why Fiddler? What is it about Fiddler that speaks to you, that prompted you to bring it to the virtual stage?

AP: My eastern European roots for one, but *Fiddler on the Roof* was always my favorite musical growing up, so it made sense for me to do my first full production in Second Life with a musical I enjoy.

JM: You said [muse] is producing *Fiddler* in conjunction with Starlite. Is that a recent collaboration? What is behind that joinder of forces?

AP: It is not a collaboration, but more accurately this musical will be shown under two banners. I have been a team leader with Starlite as a choreographer for a few years and will be presenting

Fiddler at Origen's Chinese Playhouse with the dancers of Starlite, which is run by Isabelle Mavendorf, as well as my own theater with [muse] dance company.

JM: Some of the cast members have been with you for years. You obviously are creating an environment in which they feel very comfortable and appreciated. What is your approach to nurturing talent, and how do you keep quality performers coming back year after year?

AP: I teach by example in all worlds. Everyone who is with me knows that no member will ever work harder than





I; that is the number one rule. There is no division for me between SL or RL. Those that are with me can reach me 24/7. In turn, we have created a wonderful community of friends that co-exist in trust and harmony. When you are responsible for a group of any size, one is accountable for their own actions, as they are reflected out to the group as well. It's all about balance and accountability on all fronts.

JM: Your sets and costumes for Fiddler are superb. What sources, if any, outside your own imagination, did you

consult when you created your designs?

AP: Just my own imagination (smiles)

JM: The [muse] Theatre is unlike traditional theaters. It has sumptuous seating that is more reminiscent of a Hollywood screening room than a theatre. The seating is very limited, which I imagine helps with lag. How do you deal with frustrated, disgruntled patrons who are shut out of performances due to the limited seating? Is it a fair tradeoff for

eliminating that soul-crushing lag?

AP: Yes, that lovely lag. Unfortunately, we can't avoid it. For an optimal performance, there will only be allowed 45 patrons per show. Each show will be performed at least twice to allow everyone to see the production. I have set up a group for each performance by date and have asked others to join, as that is their ticket in. Thirty minutes before show time, the region will be closed. Having multiple performance dates also allows for flexibility for the patrons. My dance schedule is always updated on my profile.

JM: What would be your ideal performance schedule for theater? How many productions a year? Do you expect to have a mix of musicals/plays/dance and musical recitals?

AP: My goal is three productions a year, mixed in with a few live concerts both in vocal and piano.

JM: [muse] has a Mission Statement, as well as a summary of the company's values (integrity, leadership, responsibility, professionalism and character). You expect a degree of accountability from your dancers. How has this been received by the troupe?





AP: Very well. Each dancer understands from the beginning the expectations of being a member of [muse] dance company. We have an amazing group of over 20 dancers currently and expect to have more interest in the coming months.

JM: You have recently launched a new online venture called MOTION, Dance in Second Life and other Virtual Worlds (motionsl.com), which is a dance network that has a chat room, as well a space for postings of upcoming events, video, photography and blogging. Please describe how it works and how interested people can apply for membership.

AP: I am very excited about this network. MOTION is a gathering place where people can meet and greet, share event information and in general, enjoy each other's company. Membership is FREE and all are encouraged to join whether a dancer, choreographer or fan. It was specifically created for the dance community to include theatre owners, dance troupes, independent choreographers, and merchants. General membership allows photo and video uploading as well as the ability

to contribute to the blogs/forums. Premium accounts are offered at \$25 USD annually for those who wish to post events and set up their own group within the network. We also have a Marketplace section for merchants and real estate for property rentals.

JM: The excitement surrounding your various ventures is palpable, and I encourage our readers to get their tickets early for Fiddler on the Roof, but also to stay tuned for upcoming [muse] events. It was a pleasure to learn more about [muse] and about you in particular. On behalf of rez Magazine and all of our readers, thank you for your passion and good luck in all of your future endeavors.



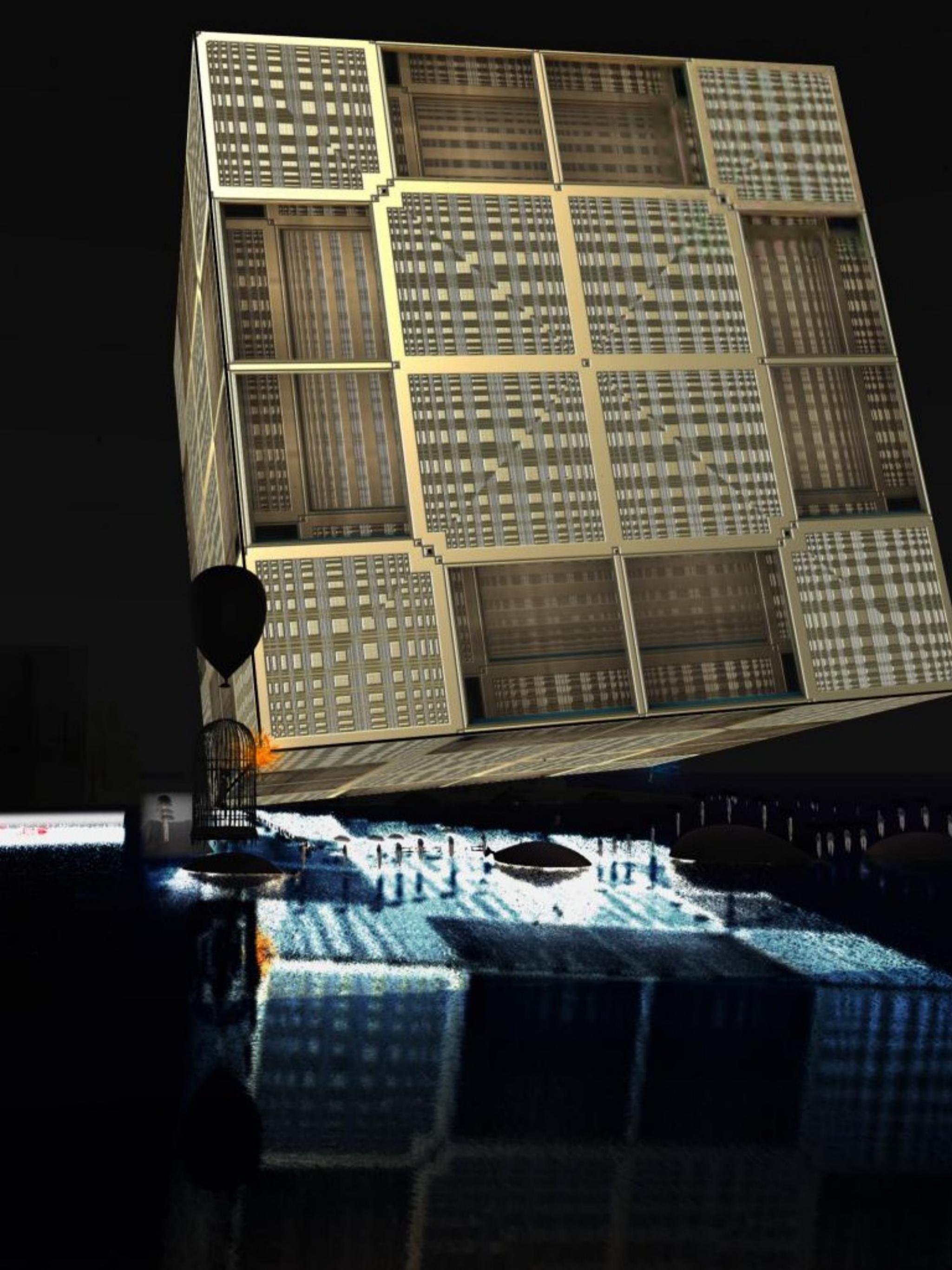
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photography
jami mills







The Monument

by Cyberphoria



About the author, taken from the files of E 188.4:

"Cyberphoria is the most beautiful woman ever, as she is created in your brain in the moment you meet her." Art Blue

Her input is your biodominance and your captured Bainbridge personality log file. You can't escape your genetic code as a human being. Same goes for the necklace she wears for digital entities based on an UUID. Coded by Belle Roussel for the ghosted Art Blue. Cyberphoria uses it to search and find him in space and time. Amendment by the so-called "Who cares? – No one does": Cyberphoria knows nothing on this. Even her name is incorrect.

I work in a server farm. They call it “The Farm.” They give us a badge with an eagle on it. We are not many, but the best. Nevertheless, my type of work is boring. My colleagues are already in a state of “Who cares? - No one does.”

I care. Once I was shocked as I did. I got promoted. Gosh, I was lucky that I made then a mistake and I was in fact not promoted. But I must be careful. Some of the admins in the low gravity center smell already my potential. I cannot risk to get again promoted. I would lose access to world E 188.4; to all the data there. Being a supervisor,

you have no longer access to a specific world. You just manage alert states on a broader level and to report call workers like me. I am in charge of 42



worlds. One is E 188.4, which I backup every 188 days - - roughly - - no need to be strict in time. As I said, “Who cares? - No one does.” So, a light

wobble happens in this server, which I try to keep on a ley-line so some wonder inside about the magic. When an alert comes out of this world, like

such an event my supervisor could not have played “Who cares? - No one does,” as the alert would have gone global.



when Donald Trump gets elected, I suppress it. It's my world. Once I was close to losing it. I just could prevent a server dump at the last minute. On

What happened? This may fill a book, a book of life. In short words, I created my first monument. If I tell you what this first monument has been, you

would not read the book. So I let it open and tell you more of E 188.4 in recent times.

There on E 188.4, they speak many languages. They need translators to translate from one to another one. In fact, some there have the ability to speak more than one language. One speaks, the other listens, speaks then in

language. They got too self-confident, developed hubris. They wanted to reach the sky. This was not my monument. I just watch them closely over time and set some parameters when I see they run into a catastrophe, the catastrophe of knowing. I use misspellings in E 188.4 as a concept for creating silent mistranslations as it is mentioned in the *Urban Dictionary*

You know a crying baby; that's the worst you can have. You can't slap it. You can't drug it. And when you feed it, it just spits it all out and cries even louder. He calls this doing art.

a different language and another one hears the words, then speaks and another listens. That's how to translate what is meant. This way a message can reach all languages in this world. An emulator, a Babel Fish, comes into your mind to solve this problem, as it looks so inefficient and time consuming. One speaks to the Babel Fish and the output comes in the languages needed. No longer a row of translators, and endless rows of them will be needed. But, there is a but: this row keeps them busy, prevents them from creating a server dump. I mentioned I prevented them from one in the past as they all spoke the same

as "one of those scenarios when you know the word looks wrong, but you can't figure out what's wrong with it." Catastrophe instead of catastrophe is all it needs to get in a row of translators to caustrophobia and then the one having it gets in a cell being called claustrophobic. That a catastrophe is ahead some of you feel, that something comes. Something looks wrong in your life and will kick you hard, you just don't know when and what? That's why we are here, the ones with the eagle badge to inject some messages. I do it by misspellings. The next word I will inject is injeria. I found it in an article in *rez* - a word

being ignored in E 188.4 – but this ignorance shall not be tolerated.

But now I have, let me speak bluntly, an asshole in E 188.4. He wants to build a monument, claiming, “This will be My monument.” And he doesn’t mean it’s to be mine. It shall be his! He plays already “Make a space for My body” on the parcel he got as a grant by Linden Endowment for the Arts. Using the sacred term, “My body,” but he means not mine! The lyrics are a provocation. He even rewrote them, if you check like an eagle, with eyes of an eagle, as I do. Read them and also listen to the song - Röyksopp *Monument* –

at <https://youtu.be/XH1t9CdPsqo>

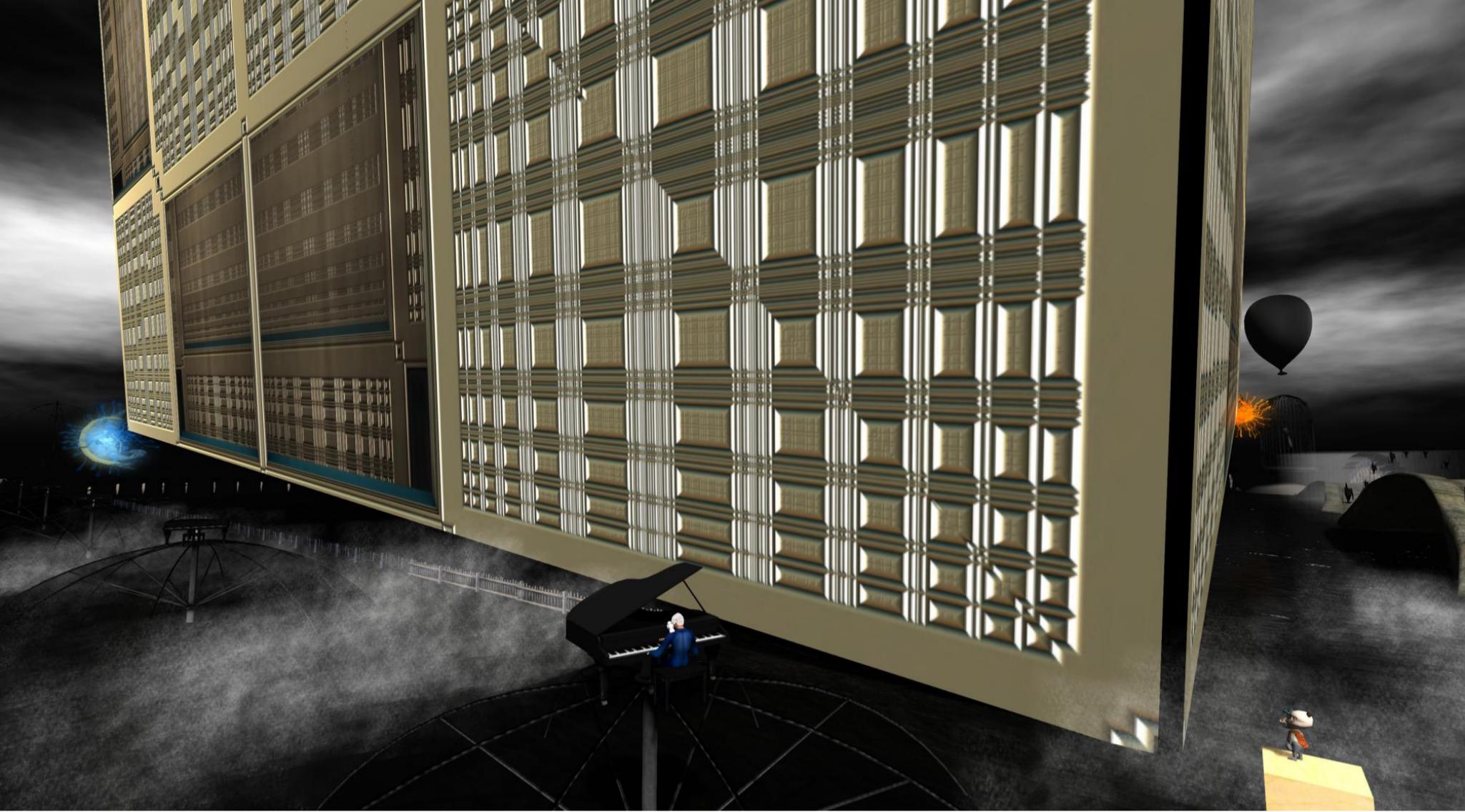
*Make a space
For My body
Dead or whole
Push this side apart
This is what I'm controlling
It's a mold, the inside that I cart
This will be My monument
This will be a beacon when I'm gone
gone gone
When I'm gone gone gone
When I'm gone
Soon when My moment comes,
I can say I did it all with love love love
All with love love love
All with love
Make a cast of My body
Pull back out,
So that I can see*

*Make a world
Are you ruling?
Make a world
That I used to be
I will let this monument
Represent a moment of My life life life
Of My life life life
Of My life*

Röyksopp - *Monument* - Lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

If I report this, pass this to my supervisor, then the server stats will be inspected and the world would be set on hold. The asshole will be extracted, but then my doings in the past will become known and they will see the modifications I have made over time in E 188.4. No longer E 188.4 will run as a social experiment, like the other simulators do - - to simulate an alternate society. For my monument, I had to take off gravity in the server and now they can fly. I could easily take gravity back, but then all the buildings will collide and the mess would be obvious even for the ones “Who cares? - No one does.”

So I let him do it. This monument makes me angry. It looks like a copy of mine with just the number of faces differing. On top he wants to put something inside that is not meant to be inside. Another world! He has no server of course; no farm. He uses technology stupidly, like a baby, but he



cries well. You know a crying baby; that's the worst you can have. You can't slap it. You can't drug it. And when you feed it, it just spits it all out and cries even louder. He calls this doing art. Blue Art. In fact, he is just a crying baby. I am so enraged!

I read the stories he has written in *rez Magazine* to find a weak spot where I can secretly lure him away from the idea with the monument. The more I read, the more I see I have to stop him. I found out he has an owl and I debugged this piece of a prim. He calls it an Artificial Intelligence, an AI. An AI I am allowed to decode. On an Ident-Unit I need a stamp by the ones, you know, the ones who do not care, but have the stamp in hand. I found no sign of any intelligence in the owl, just a script for making noise, sending chat,

moving wings and the beak to open and close and an eye texture rotating. I wonder why the editor of *rez*, Jami Mills, gets so attached to the owl, feeds him and speaks nicely to him. Then the owl blinks and thanks her and she smiles. And she does not need to use a translator! The owl, the prim understands her! This scares me to death.

I once took their universal language, now I must take their speech, completely. I will change the physics of their air. No longer shall it transmit audio signals, no sound shall reach their ears. They will still breathe and have ears and may move their lips, same as always. And for the first time, after I got notice of the threat, I smile. The deaf will become masters of this world. They sign to each other. The

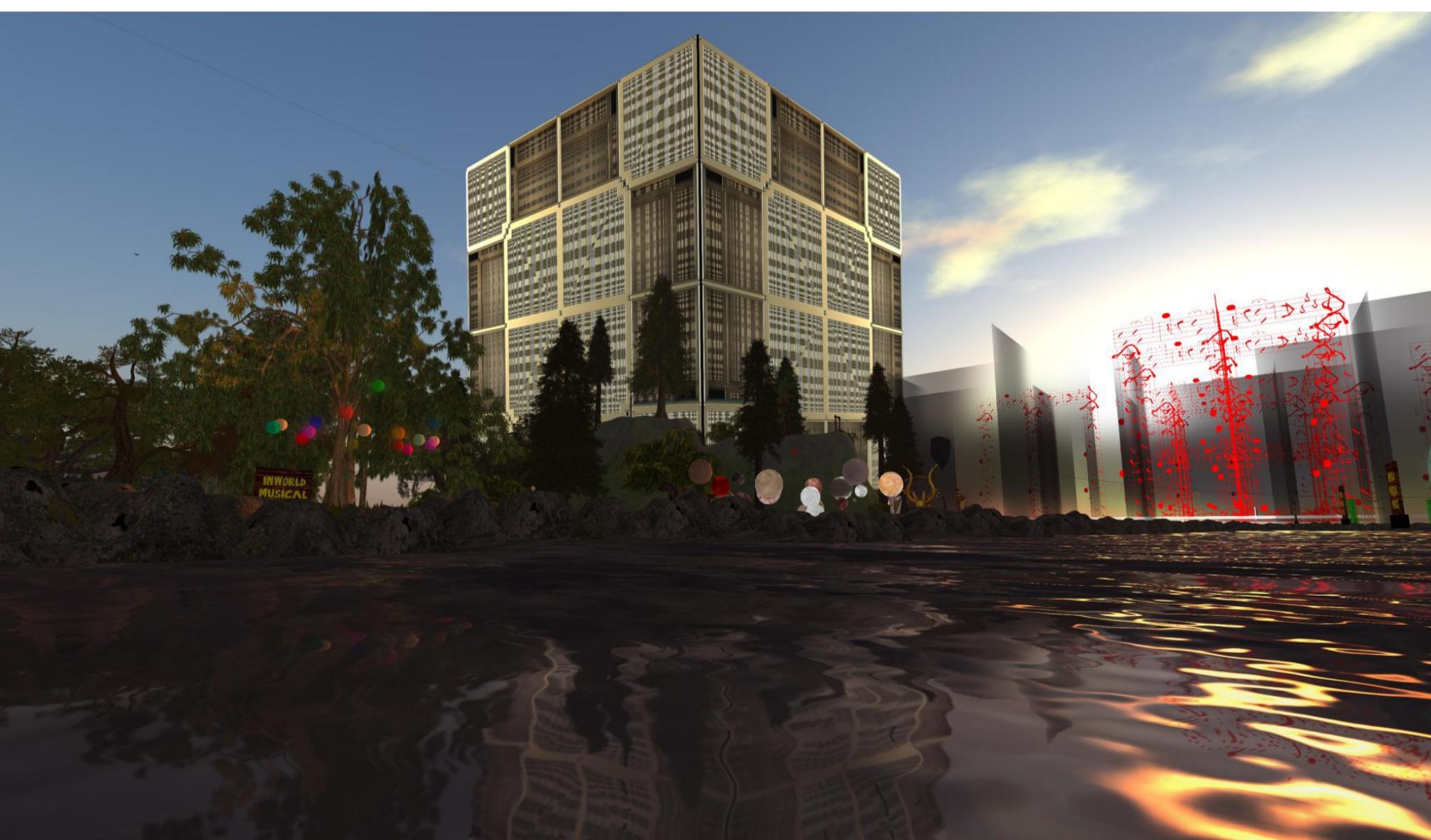
society will be put upside down. People have to stand and face each other when they want to exchange a thought. A new age might get born. The age of closeness. A new understanding of what it means to be human. What luxury it is to be socialized in my server E 188.4. Maybe this is the solution to end wartimes? The perfect society? The Farm will no longer be located on the Moon and I can breathe in open air. Maybe I will keep my badge even when my monument will be noticed? I see so many bright options for my future.

I change the server settings and grins at this Art Blue, and I send him a last song to listen to before I press the button to take audio off from E 188.4.

It is Röyksopp - *What Else Is There* - <https://youtu.be/KLpkXtM-VI8>

And I let his owl send him an IM with parts of the lyrics: "It was me on that road, But you couldn't see me, Too many lights out, And then flashlights and explosions, Roads are getting nearer, We cover distance but not together, It's about you and the sun, A morning run, The story of my maker, What I have and what I ache for, I've got a golden ear, I cut and I spear, And what else is there to make it happen."

I see him rezding a giant Noob inside this world cube, made by Gem Preiz, the fractal artist from France. They shall still see the amazing depth of life, but talking about it will be gone.



But what is this now? The noob signs. He does ASL - - The American Sign Language. This creature of a noob signs to all around to rebel against the world maker, to let slavery behind and to destroy the outer boundaries which is actual a big cube. The cube changing now - - oh no, no - - to a pyramid, he claims now as his! And Art holds up a syringe he injects himself with injeria, the virus Harry Hacker made for the Perfect 10 to find.

And the server E 188.4 dumps and Art Blue jumps on a teleporter. I hear the

alert. This failure in The Farm will be My monument. Art Blue stands behind me. He asks, "Who cares?"

Then he walks to my piano and plays, and the owl pads with his claws. I know Art Blue can't play the piano; he never took lessons on it. And the owl doesn't have a script for his claws to move either, and I get really scared.

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TERPSICORPS ARTWERKS





The Little Voices

by Lisa La



Sometimes they do whisper
sometimes they cry
sometimes those tiny voices hum in the corner

Sometimes they sing
sometimes they bring friends to dance in the shadows
and press their noses to the glass

Sometimes they criticize
the dust on the windowsill
and the gait of my walk

Sometimes they stutter in the night
squeaking in delightful pleasure
and lost in the space

Sometimes they shout at the drivers
lost in their lanes
sometimes they recant the history of lost days

So bring me the voices
call me insane
these are my muses fused in the brain

They live in the cells
tangled, bohemian mess
pulling on torn stockings and vintage dress

They do not like to sleep
but give me reprieve
to dream and plan and sometimes grieve

This savored taste is now my own
excuse me the bell has rung
a new voice has come home.

The Cabin Boy

by RoseDrop Rust





image by Storyah

One moment, I was on my treadmill lunging for a ciggy, then twisting, turning, head pounding, the smell of something like fish, creaking wood and flapping sails, I crack open my eyes to find myself hung by my ankles, surrounded by... pirates! The look on the hungry faces of rough women strikes with the wet kiss of command. Will I be protected by the Captain or thrown to her crew? I mention I could play a tune or two. So, what ARE the duties of a "cabin boy"?

Modern memories fade as I begin to learn the varieties of duties of a Cabin Boy on the ship of the Amazon pirates. I soon learned the many poses and walks I was compelled to adopt when commanded to "serve dinner oddly." I could endure the beatings, but that wasn't the worst, assignments to the crew bear forgetting. I thought I must have been delirious when I thought I saw a twentieth century smallpox vaccination scar on a female 16th century pirate captain.

Some things a cabin boy must do leave me begging to be beaten into amnesia. There's "poking the knothole," "dancing on bullets." The worst is "louse hunting." I hate when they say, "Dive, dive, dive!" The Captain still gets me out of the worst of the embarrassment. For now, I am left wondering which of the raisins in my gruel might be fresh and which are

mostly wing.

I love being a cabin boy! There's all the wonderful women mates and there's rum enough to dull the memories of the night's terrors. Lady Captain, my Captain knows something of discipline, but was kind enough to have me pulled from under the keel before the barnacles flayed me alive. I should have known better than to ask what constituted keel-hauling. Somebody save me!

I woke with a pounding in my head I took to be the result of all the grog I was compelled to drink last night. The "mates" seem to enjoy a drunken cabin boy trying to keep his feet. Soon I realized this was no ordinary headache, it was actual impact between the back of my head and the deck. For a minute I wondered what that rhythm was, then I recognized the shanty being played and the role my head was playing in keeping the beat. I'll be resting in the ice bin until then.

She's mean, that Blackie LaBlanche, but I couldn't take any more, I'm a cabin boy, but there's limits. After "no" escaped my lips, fear fought with bile for occupancy of my throat. Anger danced on her face as she raised her eyebrow, but fled when she made caustic eye contact with the Capt'n. Blackie careened off, grumbling of other duties. I purchased a fear

forgotten breath, desperately masking the tiny triumph. I'll be buying a round of hope for the bar!

Wind, like an army of cat-o-nine-tails ripped at his skin. Still, from his station tethered to the mast, when the Captain was knocked senseless, he covered her limp form. Cannonballs were flying only moments ago, but the sea has joined the battle. Warring ships come perilously close to being clapped together in the waves. The cabin boy struggles to retain consciousness, his muscles scream equal protest at strain and sudden release. Washed up, no longer slave, but hero.

Dragging with the dogged determination of a Marine leaving no one behind, I held to the detachment that near drowning grants us. I cleared her airways, pointed her chin skyward, brought my lips to her mouth and inflated her lungs like a balloon animal clown. Suddenly, an involuntary, protesting flood of nauseating sea water bubbled out. Her eyes widen in fear, wonder, gratitude, and then soften to a wry weak ironic smile. If she is feeling strong enough, I may bring her.

Her fever was the beginning of a long convalescence. A broken leg's splint was funny when the homemade crutch's maiden voyage led to a slow comic spiral ballet. Breathing was difficult due a bruised sternum, the

result of this cabin boy's effort to bring air to her lungs. A hoarse "thank you" is attempted by throat damaged by a battle blow and "shushed" by a finger to my lips. I will think about the curious smile I have begun to treasure.

The cabin boy stood, sweat boiling in the breeze. He learned reckoning while on the ship, and placed them in what he had known in the future as the Outer Banks of the Carolinas. He recalled her admiring gaze as he jigged the day he found the spring assuring their survival. Her injuries were extensive. She said, "My name is Sara." "Maybe I'll call you Sally," said he in jest. "I am at a disadvantage, Sir." He noted a crimson blush as mirth danced in her eyes.

"Please, I want some more coconut milk," she wheedled, sparkling eyes belying her pout. The cabin boy had been up, "That tree." several times, returning sweaty and itching from the climb. "They are like a Pina Colada." He had just about had enough and felt a primitive growl coalesce in his throat. To his surprise, his former captain's skin seemed to ripple from its center outward like a wave from a pebble in a pond. He muses on anger, arousal, and modern cocktails.

Red sails in the sunset, forced her plan into motion. She had developed a talent for transforming herself into a

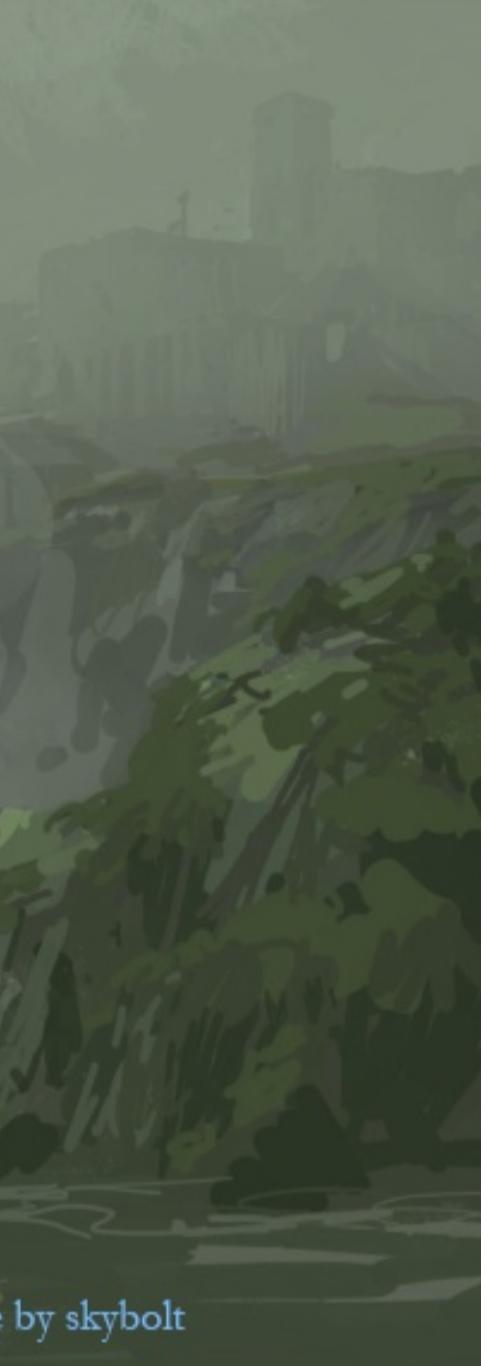


pitiable figure of deformity enhanced by cruelty. She coached in me hardness and truly formidable fighting skills. Her cringing and my brandishing convinced our visiting sailors I could be an asset as security, freeing us from our island's isolation. We turned southward to return to their oriental land.

On the ships of Rising Sun his "Sally's" pitiable crooked shamble, vacant eyes, and unsuspected knowledge of Nipponese got her ignored access to supposedly private conversations. The navigator's unpopularity, position and private quarters doomed him to be drawn into

a brutally brief duel. When his gear followed his body into the ocean and the door closed, Sally uncoiled on the bunk as from a feline nap. "Be my Valentine Angin-san?" she said, eyes down. "Will you be pillowing your little Mariko tonight?"

Month after month we sailed, only barely convincing the other sailors that we knew where we were and where we were going. And night after night, we put on the demonstration of the kind of cruelty that could make a hardened mariner pause. In the pilot's cabin the ruse became ritual and in the throws of it, a muted panting rose. "Ah, my Angin-san," she breathed, while



by skybolt

musing on a distant memory of a girlfriend's sighs. "You look a bit like Richard Chamberlain."

"How ... do you ... know ... so ... much .. about ... the Japanese?" I puffed. We had had a particularly loud and secretly satisfying "demonstration" for the crew and I could no longer contain myself. The elephant in the room started trumpeting

and I had to know how the cripple the crew referred to as "Sah-ree!" knew. "I was wondering when you would ask how you came to my ship," she laughed!

Our passion's game of cat and knots took a long awaited turn as he pulled the cord to bind inextricably. "Ooo," She giggled, "I give up. Ow. Loosen that." "No." "No?" I waited for an answer or two. Then I heard it again. A tune she often whistled and now she sang. "Fire flows to wash, and water burns to see, earth blows open doorways, the crystal brings me thee." She shifted, mildly vexed. "I will tell

you. I meant to tell you anyway." There's more than knots to unravel.

"This is what I know," my Sally said, "I was sitting quietly, it was just last year. When the woman said, "May I take a seat my dear?" I paid it little mind. I often sit here with my novel and my wine. If reading long enough, most folks will leave, but she sat there singing and I felt her eyes on me. "My name is Lilith, Sara, I chose you. I gift you with this song and a power too."

He wakes up hungry for that first smell of her. Sweat, spice, and sex, blood, beer, and bile, tallow, tea, and tears. But before his eyes opened he knew the smells had lost the balance of her spirit. An acrid smell was in her place. He saw a circle on the bed. Flint, water, dirt, and a crystal are what's left. His eyes widen, damp. The cabin boy/navigator perceives a lilting laugh and then a rush of motion he has felt only once before.

He heard a firearm's report, saw black smoke, and a puff of white powder settling back on her wig. Sally warned him to silence, finger to lips. "Give me the pistol," she said. Unsteadily, he moved to comply. She traced a circle in the air to indicate he check his surroundings. He turned, taking in manicured grounds, a castle, and two elaborately gowned young ladies. "Does this handsome stable boy serve

well?" Sara blushed, "As with any weapon, it is only as dangerous as the fool wielding it."

Rolling her off abruptly, he sat upright, stunned at the possibility he was pleasuring his Sally with another stable boy's tackle. "I said, when you think on it, odds are good of a past life or an ancestor being somewhere near just about anyplace in the past, but that is how I am able to sing you here." The refrain, "I'm my own grandpa" from a relatively modern country novelty song sprang to mind. Is the opposite of "re-incarnation," "de-incarnation?"

When he finally dared look in the mirror, he saw more resemblance than he feared, less than he hoped. Two parents from four grandparents, 16 greats, etc. But why did Sally look the same? He looked from the coach at a red Phrygian capped mob acting out its grim justice. Was he here to do something or just bear witness? He tries to remember all he knows of the French Revolution, and ponders the crossroads of fate, chance, and eddies in time.

"That "pig" is worth your weight in truffles." The archetype for fops re-assumed his party smile, "Still, you helped greatly in the plan Marguerite here concocted," Percy pointed to my self-satisfied Sally, "to aid in the escape of our friends. Now, what is in

this drink you poured for that brute of a mob leader? Nice touch to call it a 'French Revolution.'" He's still confused about the "Scarlet Pimpernel." Is it a bread, a person, or a little red flower?

He'd been been a cabin boy for amazon pirates, a Nipponeese pilot, and a royalist conspirator in revolutionary France. It seems Sally was off fulfilling some notion with that swish/hero Percy/Pimpernel. Left idle in the body of his stable boy ancestor, he was about to follow his own lead when standing in the doorway is the Lady Antonia. "Wither to?" "Your Sally said I should keep an eye on you. 'Tis probably better that ladies figure out what You should do," said she. Oh? Ooooh!

The distinctly unmanly noise he made when Sally smacked him on his newly bandaged buttocks, would take some time to live down. Especially with the fop, Percy in the room. "You're lucky that dirk didn't plow into your liver instead of making this tiny hole in your fat ass" she said, "You were supposed to restrain her, not get yourself killed." The plan had worked inasmuch as the Lady Antonia, won't betray them again soon. Perhaps I will be standing up.

Acrid smoke in his nose, he at first thought he was in a tree. He struggled and the "tree" began to move to restrict

him. Looking up, to his horror, he beheld this giant smiling moon of a face. Startled, he started to yell, but soon learned that his throat, mouth, and tongue had no muscle memory for speech. In his frustration all he heard himself say was, "Whaaaa!" He turned and saw Sara beside him giggling, "I told you what would happen if you kept on acting like a baby." He started screaming at Sara, "Whaaaa!"

The Cabin Boy had been deposited into a babe in arms ancestor by the Lilith chant, but was practicing speech diligently. His family marveled at his vocalizations. On the one hand, they seemed fully formed dissertations. On the other, they were, besides a few carefully pronounced words, incomprehensible baby gibberish. Further, he seemed to direct the vast majority of his speech went directly to, or possibly, about, his nanny. "Sara, do you know what he goes on about?"

*"The farmwife's fertile furrow,
need not long lay fallow,
when the farmer's frisky phallus,
feeds and seeds her field row."*

The young mother, self-satisfied, cooed her clever rhyme at her infant, not knowing a great, something, grandson, and time rider, might be in there listening. For a moment, she became embarrassed, "You pay attention so intently," then laughed.

Nothing more than a babe, he'd be a not-so-innocent witness to his ancestor's thorough plowing later that evening.

The Cabin Boy admitted being a baby was educational and did not begrudge the affection lavished upon him. Sara was available night and day to cuddle. She whispered, "I know your frustration and you know we must move before you can actually express yourself." Yes, but he also learned irrefutably that muscles are where our physical intelligence lies, and a million neural pathways must be drawn to do the simplest of things. Fingers can learn to long for the touch of strings.

The cabin boy remembered every vicious kick she delivered. Acutely aware of the memory of muscles, he built his pathways to the brain deliberately. The madam who was his current "employer" was a bully. Cruel with proud impunity, her strategy was retribution or blackmail in all her dealings. Many a client left the brothel clutching his privates in pain and shame. "My father, Reverend Palin, had no mercy for pagan slave or indentured scum. You cross me, and I will visit the wrath of the Almighty on you."

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Numbers

Jullianna Juliesse

Thoughts and prayers—
While well-intended and sincere,
Are not enough in these times.

We who treasure peace,
Treasure life,
That which makes us human—
We recoil at the numbers.

169 empty chairs—
Those who will never again be present
At the Sunday meal.
The silver pool absorbs the loss,
Then reflects the shards back, in an outward blast.

2,983 names on the parapets—
The square-acre fountains mask
The city noise, momentarily.
Then the magnitude hits me flush in the gut,
My words drowned by the gush of water,
Millions of tears,
Pumped down into the bedrock, then back to the surface.

129 wait for that final trip home,
To the earth, into the air, or the waves.

What will be your memorial,
After the thoughts are thought
And the prayers for the dead are said?

So many numbers, so many places,
I cannot list them all—
London, Beirut, Paris, San Bernardino, Brussels, Mumbai, Spain.

And indeed, it is plain.
This is just the beginning.

God is great, they say—
But not in the way they would have us think.
Let your faith be bigger than your fear.

A photograph of a cozy apartment interior. In the foreground, a large window looks out onto a bright, sandy beach. The room features a wooden floor, a red patterned rug, and a blue beanbag chair. A small potted plant sits on the floor near a black sofa. The ceiling has a grid of recessed lights.

This Apartment by Mariner Trilling



image by JoakimOlofsson

It was the right combination of fins, feathers
and fingers, over millions of years
that got me into this apartment.

It's a nice place and very exclusive
but my background check revealed
my impeccable history going all
the way back to the primordial ooze.

"He was a great neighbor," a small spec of bacteria
told my potential landlord.

"He lived back here when we were all
just organic molecules."

The great character references from
the vast puddles of brown green slime
struggling with autotrophy impressed my landlord
and he immediately drew up the paperwork
that got me into this apartment.

It was the right combination of people passing
through the space I occupy that got me
into this apartment.

The nerdy school kid fleeing schoolyard bullies led the
long-haired pot-smoking surfer to meet the sharp
dressed sales rep who removed his suit and
tie to reveal the weird wise old hipster
settling into the community.

Not that I'm any of those people now.

They lie strewn along the sidewalk in the form of skin
dander, sloughed off dead cells and hair.

Sometimes, I feel the urge to follow that path backward
and reassemble that nerdy school kid so I can give him
the hard-earned advice that will save him
so much future suffering:

"Vodka and tequila don't mix."

And I would thank him for the work he did
that got me into this apartment.

It was the right combination of civilizations
that got me into this apartment.

The old Greek guy calculating the radius of the
stylish arches and that whole group of people that
anonymously sent me a small box of electrons
to power my hi-def toaster oven tablet computer.

Together, they gave me everything I need to
Solidify the carpeted floors under my feet.

On the final page of the dusty volume of
the world's complete history,
they've reprinted the actual street map
that got me into this apartment.

As much as I love this apartment, someday
I would like to move to a larger one with
a Jacuzzi and room for a dog.

Naturally, a bigger apartment would mean
a bigger demand for money not yet born.

And, there would be a hateful chanting of angry mobs
condemning my covetous materialism.

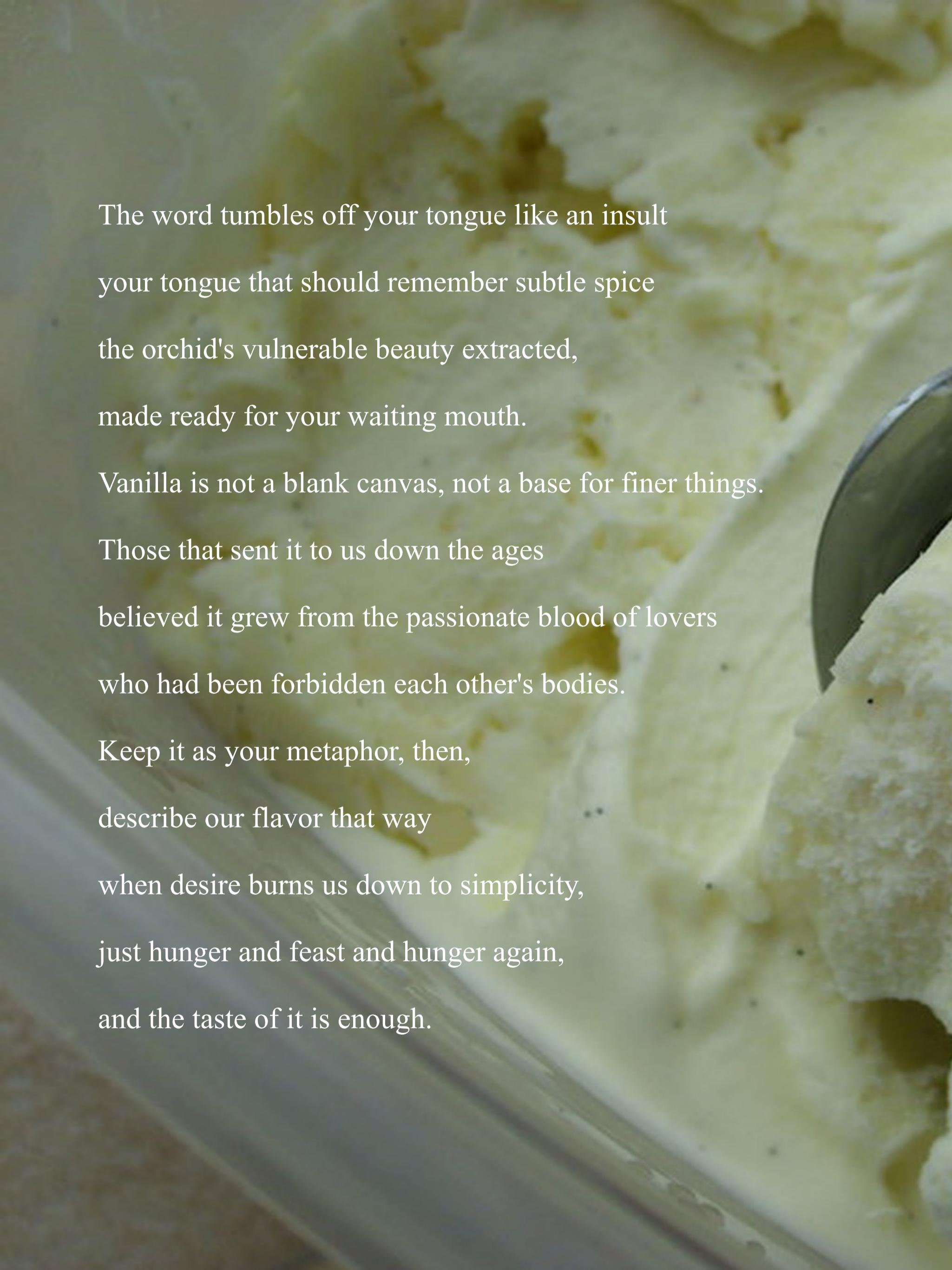
“The water in your Jacuzzi could quench the thirst of
dehydrated children and your dog could provide a
Thanksgiving dinner feast for an impoverished family,”
they shout militantly.

But the cosmos is a big place with plenty of
Water and dog meat for everyone.

We just have to reach out with the right combination of
individuality and collectivism to take hold of it.

Of course, we'd have to stop beating
the shit out of each other and collect up
our tokens for the first month's rent.

Then we could all sit in the Jacuzzi,
pet the dog and relax, reflecting on the path
that got us all into this apartment.



The word tumbles off your tongue like an insult
your tongue that should remember subtle spice
the orchid's vulnerable beauty extracted,
made ready for your waiting mouth.

Vanilla is not a blank canvas, not a base for finer things.

Those that sent it to us down the ages
believed it grew from the passionate blood of lovers
who had been forbidden each other's bodies.

Keep it as your metaphor, then,
describe our flavor that way
when desire burns us down to simplicity,
just hunger and feast and hunger again,
and the taste of it is enough.

Vanilla

Flynt Firebrand

photo by girladren code de phoenix

Unpredictable

by Cat Boccaccio





photo by Ffex

Jerry's new next-door neighbours asked him to pitch in on a proper fence between their two properties, to replace the old post and rail spruce fence that was falling in on itself. So Jerry paid less than half (since his was the "back side" of the fence) and the neighbours built a six foot high, cedar lattice-topped privacy fence.

They were leaving their side untreated, they told Jerry, because they liked the natural aging of cedar, but he should feel free to paint or stain his side as he chose.

So it was while he was applying a coat of semi-transparent wood stain and sealer to the lattice top of his side the fence, that he saw whom he thought were his neighbours, Sandy and Ron, pulling weeds in the big old shrub and flower border up against the back alley.

He couldn't really tell if they were Sandy and Ron at first, because all he saw were two big asses, one a little narrower than the other, one sunburnt already, as they were experiencing a summer-like spring. They were uncovered, and it was harder than you might think to recognize asses and limbs without clothes on. When they stood, and Jerry was able to examine their faces objectively, he saw that yes, they were Sandy and Ron, his new neighbours.

Now Jerry had seen many bodies in his 70 years, that's for sure, but it was the context this time, of folks he barely knew and had seen in pants or shirts or skirts or dresses, now with every body part hanging out. And body parts just hang there. We forget how body parts hang, Jerry thought. It seemed impractical to Jerry, evolution-wise, to have hanging, vulnerable parts that could expose one to injury or impede flight from danger. It seemed a better design to have all those dangled parts housed internally.

But then, Jerry didn't believe in a god or creator anymore; and a woman's breasts were usually attractive to men, which was undoubtedly helpful when propagating the species, and probably a man's penis revealed things about him that primitive women might have found educational.

"Jerry!"

It was not his neighbour Sandy's voice, but the voice of Lily-Rose Roades, the young high school teacher who resided in the bungalow next to Jerry on the other side.

She was in the back lane. He ducked instinctively when she called his name, so Sandy and Ron wouldn't see him peering through the lattice, and waved at Lily-Rose, who was holding a covered casserole dish.

He stepped off the ladder and they met at the gate, which was part of the old spruce fence and hung on one hinge.

“I’m just going to say hello to the new neighbours,” Lily-Rose said. “I’ve never lived in a neighbourhood before, you know. So this is what you do, right?” And she held up the casserole, which was in a white Corningware casserole dish decorated with blue flowers. “I just loved the jam and pickles you brought me when I moved in.”

“Oh, thanks again, and definitely what you do,” Jerry said.

Now Lily-Rose was a grown woman, and didn’t need protecting, but Jerry was old-school and chivalrous in his way, and didn’t like the thought of Lily-Rose inadvertently bumping into Sandy and Ron and their hanging parts.

“Do you have time for a cup of tea, a beer, or one of my famous Harvey Wallbangers?” Jerry asked. It was only 3 pm, but a weekend.

Lily-Rose had never tasted a Harvey Wallbanger before, which is a cocktail made from orange juice, vodka, and Galliano liqueur. They sipped their drinks on Jerry’s covered patio, and looked up when Ron appeared in the lane. He was poking his head around the tall fence. They could only see his

uncovered face and torso.

“Hey neighbours,” Ron said. “Care to join us for happy hour? Clothing optional.”

Lily-Rose happily took herself and her tuna and bow-tie pasta casserole into Ron’s garden, and she and Jerry joined Ron, Sandy, and their bits at a small round plastic table shaded by a blue striped umbrella.

She kept her clothes on, and so did Jerry.

The world was getting more and more unpredictable, Jerry thought. He had never felt comfortable with surprises, because they were so rarely pleasant ones, in his experience. But Sandy and Ron seemed to be nice folks, and he was startled by his fondness for Lily-Rose, and a body was just a body. He started to think, for the first time in his life, that unpredictability might not be a bad thing after all.





Peyote Dreams by Consu



photo by SiMoon 820902

uela Hypatia Caldwell

It was a cold rainy October river trip on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. I was one of seven river guides, taking a group of Phoenix policemen down on what they called a fishing trip. They were fishing for the trophy-sized trout that were in the river at that time. The second to the last day, we ran Lava Falls, which is known as the largest navigable white water in North American. We camped just below at a heliport, so that we could fly our passengers out by helicopter the next morning.

We woke up to three inches of snow on the ground. Apparently, there was around three feet of snow on the ground and much more on the North rim, so the helicopters opted not to pick up our passengers. That meant that we had them for an extra day. During that time, they ate all the food we'd packed, for our day and a half deadhead, to our take out at Diamond Creek.

On a previous motorized trip, one of the boatmen had left a couple of large gunny sacks of beer for us below the heliport. For that reason, we drank our dinner, having one of the wildest parties I've ever experienced.

The next day we pulled into the ramp famished. The outfitter showed up with a shuttle driver without bringing us any food. They couldn't even imagine how

they were supposed to know we needed food at the take out. After the D Rig, I climbed into a van driven with the shuttle driver. She turned around in the driver's seat with an apologetic look and said, "I'm sorry we didn't bring you any food but I have these." She handed me a ziplock bag full of jell capsules filled with a gray powder. She said they were dried ground peyote buttons and said a good dose for me would be between five and seven capsules. I took seven and this is a poem of that experience:

Diamond Creek visions of a hungry sunset give way to peyote dreams with a presidential debate in the background.

We move down a highway, as dashboard lights leave tracers across my visual spectrum, leading to revelations of a taco salad that comes alive in vibrant lettuce green that bleeds salsa red with textural corn chips making their bold presence known as the outfitter bellows out potbellied blow hard imitations of, "There you go again, Mr. President"; yukking it up with self-importance and then says, "What's the matter, you don't like Mexican food?"

It was a trip of autumn colors, in canyons so grand, as the river that sculpts the earth continues to dig its channel, with an energy of lava falls

grandiosity, in its white water magnificence.

But peyote visions light up the darkness, as the engine rumbles



image by reykat

At the same time law enforcement fishes for trout, while in camp, they are oblivious to pot-smoking boatmen; drinking beer, cocktails in camp, poker by lantern light, while exposing a moth ballet about their heads

The evening shadows are enhanced by flute melodies reverberating off the canyon walls with a creeping chill of autumn breezes that sets the scene for the coming winter.

through the desert night. Saguaro silhouettes sing charms and enchantment, with yucca and mesquite accompaniment. It was Peyote consciousness devouring my hunger in the here and now moment of earthly sensations transcendence into heavenly awareness; and then it all fades away into a Marble Canyon sunrise.

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